

December 16, 2004

Mr. Guy Benson
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Benson,

I am writing you concerning the Federal Communications Commission's recent announcement regarding the use of cell phones while in flight. Allowing people to talk on their cell phones in flight would be a terrible idea. I understand that the world around us has changed and that many people feel the need to always be connected. Unfortunately, it is very rare that these "always-connected individuals" pay attention to the negative connection they are having with the people around them. While on their phones, many people seem to show very little consideration as to the subject they are talking about and who might overhear them. As someone who flies quite regularly I have been appalled by some of the conversations I have been forced to listen to just sitting on the plane at the gate.

Recently, the problem has even gotten worse as airlines now allow passengers to use their cell phones as soon as the plane lands. Honestly, I do not have a problem with someone making a brief call in order to contact their ride. What I do have a problem with are passengers that immediately place calls to speak about the most inappropriate topics. I really do not need to overhear grown adults talk on the phone in baby talk to their children, nor do I need to know about the latest office gossip, nor is it really appropriate for me to overhear some of the office politics I have heard discussed. To make matters even worse, Nextel has added a new dimension to the topic as now thanks to their walkie-talkie service I am now forced to hear not one but both sides of the conversation.

I am urging you to do all you can to put a stop to this proposal. We as a society are in dire need of common courtesy when it comes to using cell phones. Their use in restaurants, stores, theatres, and just about every other public local has gotten way out of hand. The fortunate part is that here on the ground I have the ability to walk away if someone is bothering me with their cell phone usage. Please do not make me feel like a hostage amongst all the chatter in the plane if this proposal were to be put into action.

Thank you,



Brian Struss